to play a major role, in the area of education of children with disabilities, Department of Education has to integrate these programmes within their schemes/programmes. For the creation of barrier free environment, the Ministries of Urban Areas and Employment, Surface Transport, Railways and Civil Aviation have to take various positive steps. In the area of employment and training, Ministry of Labour has an important role. It is to be emphasized that the concerns of the persons with disabilities has to be included as a part of the mainsteam development programmes of the country.

(b) The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation has been registered on 24-1-97 with the aim of supporting entrepreneurial efforts of persons with disabilities and bring them into the mainstream of economic activity.

(c) The Government is in the process of finalizing the "National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Mental Retardation and Cerebral Palsy Bill" for Cabinet approval.

(d) The post of Chief Commissioner and the minimum personal staff have already been created.

(e) All State Governments have been requested to take necessary steps including provision of budgetary allocation for speedy implementation of the provisions of the Act. Union Welfare Minister has taken up the matter with the Chief Ministers of the States and Prime Minister has already writen to Central Ministers and Chief Ministers of the States in this regard.

(f) A conference of State Secretaries incharge of persons with disabilities was held on 12-2-1997 at New Delhi to discss the implementation of the Act.

(g) Many aspects specified in the Act in respect of facilities for disabled children are being covered by the Ministry of Human Resources Development Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) Scheme. During the current year the resources under IEDC have been augmented to expand its coverage.

(h) Under Ministry of Human Resources Development, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) launched in 1994 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Integrated education for all children with mild to moderate disabilities is being given special emphasis. Financial parameters have been worked out and guidelines have been evolved for this purpose.

Training Institute for specialising teachers in disabilities

2162. SHRI E. BALANANDAN:
SHRI JIBON ROY:

Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to implement the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and full Participation) Act, 1996;

(b) name of the State Transports which provide for access facilities for persons with wheel-chairs in their vehicles; and

(c) The number of training institutions set up for specialising teachers in disabilities?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) A statement is enclosed. (*See* below).

(b) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act.

1995 which has been enforced w.e.f. 7-2-96 provides that the appropriate Governments and the local authorities shall within the limits of their economic capacity and development take special measures to permit persons with disabilities easy access in buses, etc.

Keeping in view the above, the Association of State Road Transport Undertaking, which is the apex organisation for all State Road Transport Undertakings in the country, has written to all State incorporation of handicapped friendly features in the vehicles both at production and operation stage.

(c) The number of training institutions in the country as on 31.3.97 under recognition of Rehabilitation Council of India is 93.

Statement

Training Institute for specialising teachers in disabilities

(a) The implementation of the provisions of the Act require a multisectoral collaborative approach of all concerned Ministries of the Central Government, the State/UT Governments and other appropriate authorities. While in the area of prevention, early detection and intervention. Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Department of Women & Child Development have to play a major role, in the area of education of children with disabilities Department of Education has to integrate these programmes within their schemes/programmes. For the creation of barrier free environment, the Ministries of Urban Areas and Employment, Surface Transport, Railways and Civil Aviation have to take various positive steps. In the area of employment and training, Ministry of Labour has an important role. It is to be emphasized that the concerns of the persons with disabilities has to be included as a part of the mainstream development programmes of the country.

(b) The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation has been registered on 24-1-97 with the aim of supporting entrepreneurial efforts of persons with disabilities and bring them into the mainstream of economic activity.

(c) The Government is in the process of finalizing the "National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Mental Retardation and Cerebral Palsy Bill" for Cabinet approval.

(d) The post of Chief Commissioner and the minimum personal staff have already been created.

(e) All State Governments have been requested to take necessary steps including provision of budgetary allocation for speedy implementation of the provisions of the Act. Union Welfare Minister has taken up the matter with the Chief Ministers of the States and Prime Minister has already writen to Central Ministers and Chief Ministers of the States in this regard.

(f) A conference of State Secretaries incharge of persons with disabilities was held n 12-2-1997 at New Delhi to discuss the implementation of the Act.

(g) Many aspects specified in the Act in respect of facilities for disabled children are being covered by the Ministry of Human Resources Development Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) Scheme. During the current year, the resources under IEDC have been augmented to expand its coverage.

(h) Under Ministry of Human Resources Development, District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) launched in 1994 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Integrated education for all children with mild to moderate disabilities is being given special emphasis. Financial parameters have

been worked out and guidelines have been evolved for this purpose.

(i) Budgetary provision for the Handicapped Welfare Division of Ministry of Welfare has been increased to Rs. 107.04 crore (Plan) during the financial year 1997-98.

(j) In order to create a barrier-free environment in consonance with the provisions of the Act, model draft building bye-laws incorporating various provisions for creation of accessible buildings for the disabled persons have been formulated and circulated for consideration of all concerned. These Rules are intended to be applicable to all buildings and facilities used by the public.

(k) The benefit of reservation of posts in favour of people with disabilities has been extended for Group A & B posts as well in Central Ministries/Departments/PSUs.

(l) 5 Core Committees have been set up with the representatives of Government officials and NGOs to ensure better facilities for physically handicapped people. The priority areas identified are as follows:

(1) Prevention, early detection and intervention

(2) Education including pre-school education

(3) Creation of barrier-free environment

(4) Women and children and aged with disabilities

(5) Vocational training and employment for people with disabilities

(m) Further, a Central Sector Scheme is being formulated to provide comprehensive and coordinated services to the people with disabilities specially for the rural areas. The scheme proposes to create the following infrastructure:

(1) An apex level institution at State level for basic rehabilitation services and manpower development.

(2) District level rehabilitation services for all sectors of disabilities.

(3) Multipurpose rehabilitation workers at block/PHC level.

(4) CBR workers at community/gram panchayat level.

(n) However, the implementation of the Act is a continous process and is subject to the limits of economic capacity of the appropriate authorities.

Drug abuse a major challenge

2163. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that drug abuse problem in the country has become a major challenge;

(b) if so, the specific reasons therefor; and

(c) the concerted action being taken by Government against the illicit traffickers of drugs in the country?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) Several studies and reports have indicated that there is rising incidence of drug abuse in the country.

(b) Peer Group pressures, curiosity, industrilisation/urbanisation and the resultant tensions, weakness of present family system are some of the apparent reasons which have rendered individuals vulnerable to social maladjustments and deviance such as alcoholism and drug abuse.